

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 6-9, and for the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in claim 5. Accordingly, claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form, and should therefore be in condition for allowance for at least this reason, which allowance is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-4 again stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ekhoff (U.S. 6,097,568). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited reference neither discloses nor suggests that the entrance and exit edges of wind shield members are concave and convex, respectively in the perpendicular direction, and also not parallel, as in claim 1 of the present invention, as amended.

Ekhoff teaches that its air dams 10 have fingers 42 which are generally straight, but may also be curved or bent. (See col. 6, lines 8-11). It is important to note, however, that the fingers 42 are shown in every embodiment to have edges upstream and downstream of the airflow are parallel. In fact, Ekhoff neither teaches nor suggests any embodiments where the upstream and downstream edges are not parallel. Even though Ekhoff teaches that the fingers 42 may be bent or curved, Ekhoff teaches only that the fingers 42 themselves may be bent or curved. And, even bent or curved, the upstream and downstream edges of the fingers 42 would still be generally parallel to one another.

In contrast, claim 1 of the present invention as amended recites, among other things, that the entrance edge of the wind shield members has a curved guide surface, and

that the entrance and exit edges are not parallel in the airflow direction. As discussed above, Ekhoff neither teaches nor suggests such a structural configuration to its air dams 10 or fingers 42. Figs. 1, 3, and 5-7 of the present Application all illustrate various embodiments exemplifying the clear language of amended claim 1 of the present invention. All of these illustrations feature a curved entrance edge to the wind shield member, and its nonparallel exit edge. Ekhoff provides no teaching or suggestion that would read upon any of these embodiments. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, the Section 103 rejection of claim 1 (as well as its dependent claims 3 and 4) based on Ekhoff is respectfully traversed.

Additionally, Applicants further traverse the outstanding obviousness rejection because amended claim 1 could not be obvious from the teachings or illustrations of Ekhoff. The present invention's concavely curved entrance edge is more advantageously effective to guide airflow to the outside of the magnetic disk than that shown by Ekhoff. The convexly curved exit edge of the present invention further allows the wind shield member to have a greater area as a whole than Ekhoff's fingers, even though the entrance edge is concavely curved. This greater area is made possible by the nonparallel features of the entrance and exit edges. This greater area is therefore further advantageous to the present invention by realizing an air bearing effect which better suppresses a disk fluttering phenomenon that would be experienced by the air dams shown by Ekhoff.

These advantages of the present invention could not be realized by Ekhoff, or even the previously cited Hall reference. Neither of the cited references teaches or suggests

wind shield members of such substantially greater area, such as would be realized according to claim 1 of the present invention. For at least these additional reasons therefore, the obviousness rejection of claim 1, and its dependent claims 3-4, is further traversed.

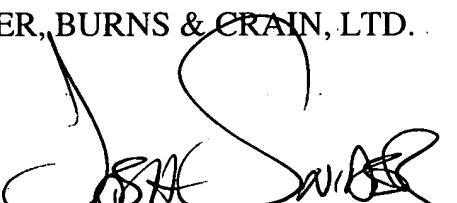
Claim 3 has been amended for grammatical purposes only, and not in response to any cited rejection or objection. Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced by this amendment, nor have any issues been raised requiring further search or consideration by the Examiner.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application, including claims 1 and 3-9, is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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